Project I.D. No119

NAME: Masada, Nobue DATE OF BIRTH: 1899 PLACE OF BIRTH: Kagawa-ken
Age: 75 Sex: F Marital Status: ____ Education: High school

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 1919 Age: 20 M.S.P.B. Port of entry: San Fran.
Occupation/s: 1. Farmer's wife 2. _____ 3. _____
Place of residence: 1. Fresno 2. Madera 3. _____
Religious affiliation: Christian church
Community organizations/activities: _____

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: Fresno
Name of relocation center: Jerome, Arkansas
Dispensation of property: Left ranch with American. _____
Jobs held in camp: 1. Office clerk 2. _____
Jobs held outside of camp: _____
Left camp to go to: Fresno

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: 1945
Address/es: 1. Madera 2. _____
3. _____
Religious affiliation: Christian church
Activities: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death: Husband died in camp

Name of interviewer: Kusunoki Date: 5/6/75 Place: Fresno
Translator Mabel Hall

Q: First of all, what is your name?

A: It is Masada Nobue.

Q: When were you born?

A: November 26, 1899. I am 75 years old.

Q: Where are you from?

A: I am from Kagawa Prefecture.

Q: What did your father do?

A: My father was a village chief. He went to Tokyo and died there. He was a Christian.

Q: Whereabouts in Kagawa Prefecture was your village?

A: It was in the western part of Kagawa Prefecture, boardering Ehime Prefecture.

Q: What kind of a village was it? What did it produce?

A: It was a typical Japanese village, and the farmers grew rice, potatoe and so forth as normal farmers did. My father did not farm, but worked at the village office.

Q: What was the religion of your family? Oh, you said your father was a Christian.

A; After my father died in Tokyo, the family returned to the village.

Q: Were there other Christian families in the village?

A: No, there wasn't.

Q: Did you have any unpleasant experience because you were a Christian?

A: Only my father was a Christian then, and I was not a Christian yet. I became a Christian after I came to America.

Q: Do you have any recollections of your childhood?

A: I was blessed with a peaceful family.

Q: How much schooling did you have?

A: I attended the prefectural girls' high school, and then went to school in Tokyo for a year.

K: Sanseis do not know anything about the country where their grandparents came from so I am asking you these things. Will you tell us anything you remember about your village or your schools.

M: Field day at school was a lot of fun. Anyway I was blessed with a peaceful surrounding.

Q: Was it a big village?

A: Yes, it was. After we came back from Tokyo we lived at my mother's.

Q: How long dod you live in Tokyo?

A: About a year.

Q: Do you remember anything that happened around that time, such as Sino-Japanese War or Russo-Japanese War?

A: No, I don't remember them. I liked school, and I studied hard.

Q: Do you have recollection about your teachers?

A: I respected my teachers, so I regarded them as great people. On the other hand, teachers took good care of pupils, so there was a beautiful relationship between teachers and pupils.

Q: Are there any instructions you received from your parents when your father was still the village chief?

A: My father was a very gentle person; gentle to his family members, and gentle to others, so I respected him very much.

Q: Are there anything he taught you to remember when you grew up?

A: He used to teach me lessons and told me stories about Ninomiya Kinjiro and Kusunoki Masashige when I was little.

Q: When did you decide to come to America?

A: In 1919 when I was 20 years old. My aunt (husband's sister) was in America, and she sent for me. I really didn't want to come.

Q: What did you do after you graduate from high school and until you were 20?

A: I was at my native village and working at a school as a teacher.

Q: Then you came to America sent for by your aunt. Where did you go first?

A: I came here Caruthers, California. I came here as a picture bride.

Q: Oh, is that so. Did you come here to get married, then?

A: My aunt was here first, and she sent for me.

Q: You said before that you didn't want to come here. Why didn't you?

A; My aunt had a yearning to come here, but I didn't. I came here because my aunt had sent for me.

Q: Do you remember the mame of the ship on which you came here in 1919?

A: I think it was Siberia Maru,

Q: Weren't there many people coming from Japan to get married in 1919?

A: There were many people who were coming here to get married.

Q: Do you remember anything that happened on board the ship? How did you spend the days on board the ship?

A: They were mostly picture brides coming to America, so we imagined about America. There were some who did not want to come but came.

Q: Did it take 2 or 3 weeks to get here?

A: Two weeks.

Q: Do you remember what kind of thing you talked about during meals?

A: We all wondered what kind of men our husbands would be.

Q: Did you feel uncertain or did you have expectation?

A: We had made up our minds to come to America, so we had hopes.

Q: Were there anybody else from Kagawa Prefecture?

A: No, there wasn't .

Q: Then were you alone?

A: Yes, I was alone. My aunt was here so I was not worried.

Q: What kind of a place did you think America was before you landed?

A: People from Hiroshima had some knowlege of America as many people came here from Hiroshima. But I did not know anything about America as few people came here from my prefecture. I had a vague impression that it is a big country.

Q: Did you have any dream that you wanted to do something?

A: I was young, so I think I had some dream.

Q: Wasn't the life on the ship monotonous?

A: Yes, indeed.

Q: How did you spend the days?

A: We were young, so we sang and talked and had a good time.

Q: Did you stop at Hawaii?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: How was Hawaii in those days?

A: Some people smuggled drugs on the ship and hid some in our slippers.

Q: About how many days did you stay in Hawaii?

A: One or two days.

Q: How was Hawaii?

A: I don't remember going sight-seeing in Hawaii.

Q: There were Japanese in Hawaii in those days, weren't there.

A: I think there were.

Q: Where did you land?

A: At San Francisco.

Q: What was your first impression of Sam Francisco?

A: My husband met me, and we did not go sight-seeing.

K: Please tell me about that time?

M: There were many tragedies. Some brides ran away because their husbands were not the men they expected.

Q: Did you find your husband by looking at his picture?

A: Yes, everyone looks for her husband comparing with pictures and finally finds him.

Q: Did you go to the Immigration office?

A: We went to the Immigration office to be processed, and after we passed we could land. Until then we were separated from our husbands. After we went through the Immigration office we were turned over to our husbands.

Q: How did you find your husband?

A: I compared him with the picture and called his name.

Q: Weren't there many men waiting for their brides?

A: Yes, so each person looks for the spouse. We look for them and they look for us.

Q: How long did you stay in San Francisco after you landed?

A: I think we stayed there two or three days.

Q: When was the big earthquake in San Francisco? Was it later?

A: I think it was before I came here.

Q: How was San Francisco in those days? Do you remember?

A: I don't remember well.

Q: Did you meet your husband for the first time when you landed?

A: Yes, it was the first time.

Q: Do you remember taking a walk down the street with your husband?

A: No, I don't. I didn't yearn to come here. It was not a happy marriage. To tell you the truth there was much difference in age between us. I didn't want to come here, but my aunt sent for me. I think my aunt's mother wanted me to come here as her daughter was here.

Q: How did your aunt find your husband?

A: They were brother and sister. I think my aunt sent for me from her selfishness. At that time I was not grateful to her, but now I am glad I came.

Q: You told me that there was much difference in age. How many years was he older than you?

A: Eighteen. In those days men were mostly 15 or more years older. We were like father and daughter.

Q: Where did you go from San Francisco?

A: We went to Fresno, and then to here.

K: Tell me about Fresno in those days.

M: There must have been many Japanese there, but it was a lonesome town, not like today.

Q: About how many years ago did your husband come here?

A: I don't know, but he came here long time ago,

Q: What did he do here?

A: He was a farmer. He was growing grape.

K: Will you tell me about your daily life in the country in those days?

M: My husband owned a ranch with his brother as a partner, but we lived in separate houses.

Q: How big was the ranch?

A: It was 40 acres.

Q: Did you hire people to grow grape?

A: Yes, we hired people.

Q: What kind of work did you do every day?

A: In those days we didn't have machinery like today, so we had to do everything in small scale like carrying sulpher on the back instead of using a tractor like today.

Q: How was an ordinary day?

A: We worked from early in the morning till late at night. I was small and young, so I got on the wagon and helped my husband load the wagon with alfalfa. In the meantime children were born one after another so I didn't help him in farming much.

Q: Did you take care of the hired helpers?

A: I prepared meals for the hired men who lived in the boys' house.

Q: About how many people were usually hired?

A: About 3, but when we were not busy we didn't hire helpers.

Q: Did you do anything else besides preparing meals to help them?

A: I prepared bath for them. It was outdoors, and I burned firewood.

Q: What about washing clothes?

A: They did their own washing. At grape harvest season we hired many Mexicans.

Q: Is there any reminiscence of the days in the ranch in those days?

A: I am surprised how I managed to live like that.

Q: How did you feel when you had to do physical labor after teaching school?

A: At first I thought I came to a terrible place, and cried many times. After I became a Christian I was glad I came to America, but until then I complained and was not thankful.

Q: Were there any Japanese families when you came here?

A: There were many Japanese in the neighborhood.

Q: Then, did you help each other when you were in trouble?

A: Yes, we did.

Q: How about language?

A: I used Japanese all the while I lived in America.

Q: Didn't you have a chance or necessity to learn English?

A: No.

Q: What was the hardest thing for you in farming?

A: We had financial difficulties, and also, as I was small I did not have strength in doing labor. I those days we went to work outside besides doing our own.

K: I was just thinking. I was born in Niigata, but my case was the opposite from yours. I was farming in Niigata, but I quit farming when I went to Tokyo. In your case you were a teacher in your village in Kagawa Prefecture, but you got married and came here to a strange country and had to farm. I think it was very hard for you.

M: I was small and did not have strength so labor was hard.

Q: You said you had financial difficulties. What was the daily wages of a farm laborer?

A: I don't remember.

Q: What did you do about the meals and your family when you went to work outside?

A: At one time I went to pick strawberry at my friend's ranch near by. I don't drive now, but in those days I learned to drive, so I drove my car and went to pick strawberry.

Q: How was the work in the strawberry field?

A: It was a hard work. As I was not very fast with my hands, I had to follow those who worked fast, so I was very tired.

Q: Some Isseis moved around, but did you stay here all the time?

A: When I came from Japan we were living 2 or 3 miles from here and all our children were born there. When the depression came we put the ranch on the mortage, and moved to a 20-acre ranch. Then the war broke out and we went into the relocation center. After the war we came back here.

Q: Then you lived in this district all the time and didn't go to other districts?

A: No, we didn't go to other districts.

Q: Did your husband own the land when you got married and came here?

A: Yes, but when the depression came he put it in mortgage and bought a 20-acre ranch.

Q: Did your husband tell you that he had trouble in buying land?

A: First time he bought land was before the anti-Japanese land law, and when we bought this land our children have grown up, so we bought it in his name.

Q: I think your husband is one of the successful men as he owned land and house. Have you ever heard the inside story of his success?

A: He was not a successful man, but he managed to make a living and brought up the children.

K: I hear that some people could not buy land or house, or find wives. Compared to them I think your husband was a successful man. If he was alive I would like to ask him how he reached there.

Q: Was he growing grape since he came here?

A: Mr. Nakashima's grandfather came here first, and he called everybody here.

Q: How many children do you have?

A: I have 7 children.

Q: Did you have difficulties in bringing up children while you were working on the ranch?

A: He was the youngest, so the older brothers and sisters helped him.

Q: Was your oldest child a boy or a girl?

A: It was a girl.

Q: How was the condition when she was born?

A: It was hard. I had to help the ranch and take care of the baby. By and by as the children grew older they helped the younger ones. The first two were the hardest.

Q: What did you do with your children when you went out to work?

A: Children in those days were easy to raise. When we Isseis get together we say that we did not raise the children, they grew up.

Q: Have you ever taken your babies to the field?

A: Other people worked hard, but I worked only about half as much.

Q: Did you send any of your children to Japan?

A: No, they were all brought up here. Those who sent their children to Japan seemed to have difficulties.

Q: Did any of your friends send their children to Japan?

A: I heard such thing.

Q: You told me that you became a Christian after you came here. When was that?

A: The war broke out in 1941 and we went to the relocation camp in 1942. At the time my husband died we had seven children, and the youngest one was 4 years old. I was in desparate situation not knowing about the future. As my father was a Christian I had been seeking after God, but I did not have an opportunity to make up my mind to become a Christian. When I was driven to the desparate situation I surrendered to God, confessed my faith and was baptized.

Q: Was Mr. Masada a Christian?

A: He was going to be baptized if he was well, but he became ill and died of pneumonia after suffereing a week, so he did not have an opportunity to do so.

Q: Did he die before the war?

A: After we entered the relocation camp.

Q: You told me that you put your house in mortage and moved here during the depression. What was the condition of Japanese in Fresno and around this area during the depression?

A: People who owned land had harder times than those who farmed by contract.

Q: Weren't there Japanese merchants in Fresno?

A: In Central California merchants' business was dull when farmers had hard times.

Q: Did anything special happen during the depression?

A: People gave up their ranches here and there as we did.

Q: How did you feel when you heard about Pearl Harbor attack?

A: I was surprised. At that time I was teaching Japanese at a Japanese Language School in Madera. We were all surprised to hear that the war broke out. Soon the evacuation order came.

Q: Before Pearl Harbor, were there any talks that Japan may go into war with America judging from newspaper and radio news?

A: There was no such talks before then. We were surprised when the war broke out. Then we had to evacuate.

Q: What were you doing when you heard the news of Pearl Harbor?

A: I heard the news at the Japanese language school.

Q: Let me ask you about the school. Was it a big school?

A: No, not too big.

Q: About how many pupils were there?

A: About 40 to 50 pupild.

Q: Was the school in Madera?

A: Yes, it was.

Q: Did you go to school every day?

A: Just on Saturdays.

Q: How did you feel after Pearl Harbor attack and till you evacuated?

A: We felt uneasy as it was something serious. Then we heard that we had to evacuate. We were bewildered.

Q: How were everyone at school?

A: Everyone was surprised. We closed the school immediately.

Side 2

Q: What were you doing when you received an order to evacuate?

Do you remember where you heard about it?

A: The first time I heard about it was when I was at the school. After I came home I heard about it from here and there, so we devoted ourselves to the preparation to evacuate.

Q: What did you think of first?

A: The first thing was to find someone to look after the ranch as we could not leave it alone. We found a very kind person in our neighborhood and he was going to look after our ranch, so we went to camp with a sense of relief.

Q: Which assembly center did you go to?

A: We went to Fresno first, then we went to Arkansas.

Q: How long did you stay at the assembly center?

A: About half a year.

Q: When did you evacuate from here?

A: It was in spring of 1942.

Q: Was it a white man that you left your ranch to?

A: Yes, he was a white man.

Q: Was he a kind man?

A: Yes, he was, and he worked here for us.

Q: Did you know him for a long time?

A: Yes.

Q: How did the white people who were not your friends treat you?

A: Some kind people were sympathetic towards us, and some people were indifferent to us as we were enemies.

Q: Did you have any unpleasant experience?

A: I didn't have any unpleasant experience when we left.

Q: What did you do with your house, tractor and other belongings?

A: We left them in this man's care, and left some furnitures in the house.

Q: Did someone live in your house, or did you leave it vanant?

A: I think somebody lived there.The white man took care of the house.

Q: How many children did you have when you entered the assmebly center?

A: We had seven children.

Q: How old was your oldest daughter then?

A: I think she was almost 20 years old.

Q: And how old was your youngest?

A: He was 4 years old.

Q: Then the oldest siter could take care of other children, didn't she?

A: Yes, she was a big help.

Q: How did you go from here to the assembly center?

A: A white man took us there.

Q: How was the life in the assembly center?

A: We all knew each other and lived together. although we heard about the uncertainty in the future.

Q: What kind of daily routine did you have in the center?

A: We didn't have work to do so we just ate and played.

Q: Were there any troubles between the outside and inside of the assembly center?

A: No, there wasn't any.

Q: What camp did you go to?

A: Jerome, Arkansas.

Q: When did you go there?

A: Fall of 1942. We were told that Jerome is so cold that our ears will be rotten. When we got there it was not that bad, but it was very cold.

Q: How did you go from Fresno to Jerome?

A: By government train. In daytime we had the shades down so that we could not see outside. We were treated like prisoners.

Q: How was the trip by train?

A: As my husband was weak , my husband, our baby and myself were in one compartment, and other children were in another compartment. There was a compartment for sick people only.

Q: What did you do with your luggages?

A: We kept them by our side.

Q: How long did it take to get to Jerome?

A: I don't remember, but it must have taken many days.

Q: Did the train stop on the way?

A: Yes.

Q: Where did it stop?

A: It didn't stop in towns, but in remote lonely places,

Q: What did you do with meals on the train?

A: They were rationed.

Q: Please tell me about the life in Jerome.

M: In Jerome the barracks were built after clearing the forrest. The barracks were big and the mess halls were big. We were in Block 42. Our oldest daughter worked in the block office, and our oldest son worked in the forrest cutting down trees. The young ones didn't have jobs. but they received rations and spending money.

Q: About how many people were there in Jerome?

A: I don't know how many people were there.

Q: Wasn't it a big camp?

A: Yes, it was..

Q: Where did most people in Jerome come from?

A: Some people came from Los Angeles, some from San Francisco and some from Central California. We did not associate much with people from other districts.

Q: From Fresno ....

A: Some people from Fresno went to Jerome, and those who were weak went to Arizona.

Q: Not everybody from Fresno went to Jerome, didn't they?

A: No, they didn't.

Q: How did you feel when you arrived at Jerome?

A: It was during the war and we did not know the condition in Japan so we did not think anything good. There were two groups of people in Jerome. One group of people who were patriotic to Japan opposed America and caused all kinds of trouble.

Q: What kind of trouble do you remember?

A: They rejected Japanese who were pro-American. They became so clamorous that some of them were sent to Tule Lake.

Q: About how many people were sent from Jerome to Tule Lake?

A: I don't know, but hundreds of them. There were radicals in our block. They were sent back to Japan or went back to Japan voluntarily from Tule Lake. They are back in America now.

Q: What did those people claim?

A: They loved Japan so much that they regarded us who were loyal to America as traitors.

Q: Did you say "yes" on the loyalty question?

A: Yes.

Q: For what reason did you say "yes".

A: We live in America and all our children were born in this country, so it is common sense that we are loyal to this country.

K: You told me before that your husband became ill and died a little after you entered the camp. Please tell me about that time.

M: My husband had paralysis, but as it was so cold in Arkansas that he caught pnumonia and died after suffering a week. I did not know what to do with seven children. I had been seeking God till then. As I could not do anything by myself I confessed my faith and was saved by Jesus. All seven children and myself were baptized at the same time.

Q: Were you baptized in the camp?

A: Yes, we were. Children were baptized not because they had faith, but as my companion. All eight of us were baptized, so people congratulated us.

Q:How was the church life in the camp?

A: Many Christians who came from all over gathered and had a church. We were very active.

Q: Were there any pastors?

A: There were 6 or 7 pastors from different places.

Q: Do you remember the names of some pastors?

A: There was Rev. Aki who was a Nisei. Then there were Rev. Inori and Rev. Sakaguchi who were Isseis. Also there were white pastors. They had been in Japan as missionaries, so when the war broke out they came to help the Japanese. Some of them could speak Japanese fluently.

Q: What was a weekly church life like?

A: We had a worship service on Sunday. We also had prayer meetings and special meetings. We were very active then.

Q: Buddhists were in the same camp weren't they?

A: Buddhists had their own meetings.

Q: What was the ratio of Christians and Buddhists?

A: There were more Buddhists.

Q: There were many Isseis in those days, weren't there?

A: Yes, Isseis were still young in those days. Sanseis were still babies.

Q: Is there anything that you still remember about the church in the camp, such as worship service or prayer meeting?

A: I was a devout Christian so I never missed a prayer meeting much less a worship service on Sunday. I also attended the Reiko-Kai sponsored by the white missionaries. At one time I heard that my son who went to work in good spirit in the morning was hospitalized and had to have appendectomy. Normally I would have rushed to the hospital, but at that time I had strong faith so I thought I would not be able to help him even if I went to the hospital. Instead I should attend the Reiko-Kai meeting and then visit him at the hospital. Strangely enough, when I went to the hospital in the afternoon after attending the Reiko-Kai meeting I found out that he did not have to be operated on as scheduled. It was a miracle.

Q: What is Reiko-Kai?

A: It is a meeting sponsored by missionaries. Not many people attended, only about 12 or 13.

Q: Did you meet once or twice a week and talked and gave testimonies?

A: Yes. We had to walk a long ways to the center as the camp was big, but we were young then.

Q: Do you remember anything special in your daily life in the camp?

A: My husband died in Jerpme, and I became a Christian. I regretted that I was not kinder to my husband, so I went deep in the forrest and confessed to God.

Q: Do you remember anything pleasant?

A: In those days I enjoyed going to church and associate with members of the church.

Q: Were there any associations with churches outside?

A: As everybody was in the same circumstances no matter what class we came from, so besides religion we were all friendly with each other.

Q: Was there any association with the white people outside the camp?

A: No, there wasn't.

Q: Were there such thing as you visiting the white churches, or the white people coming to the camp as guest speakers?

A: There were many missionaries in the center, so we did not have to invite guest speakers from outside.

Q: Your oldest child was a daughter, What about the rest of your children?

A: The second child was a son, third one was a daughter, 4th one was a son, 5th one was a daughter, 6th one was a son and the last one was a son.

Q: How old was your oldest son at that time?

A: He was 18.

Q: Didn't you have to worry about him being drafted?

A: He had to support the family, but the second son enlisted in the service after we came home.

Q: Didm't he go from the camp?

A: No, he was too young when he was in camp. He enlisted after he came home.

Q: Can you tell me about people who enlisted from the camp?

A: I think the parents missed them, but they volunteered to go into the service. There were funerals in the camp of some boys who were killed in action. I felt very sorry for them.

Q: Were there many who were killed in action?

A: Yes, there were quite a few. I know one family that sent four boys to war and they all came home safely. On the other hand some poeple lost their only son in the war.

Q: What were the worries of mothers who had their sons in the war?

A: They were worried day and night about the safety of their sons.

Q: Was your oldest daughter graduated from high school then?

A: Yes. As my husband died, she helped the family with farming. In those days she was more devout Christian than I was. At one time while she was working she received a message from God, and decided to dedicate her life to God. She attended a Bible school in Los Angeles. After graduating from it she went to Pacific College in Seattle. There she met June Miyake who had come from Japan to study. They were married, and she helped her husband go through the college. Seven years later they went back to Japan with the baby, but her husbsmd died of cancer. His father was a pastor of a Free Methodist Church in Osaka. She lived with the in-laws and taught English at Osaka Jogakuin while bringing up her child. She came back here after living in Japan for 13 years.

Q: Did you have any worries about the education of small children?

A: There were schools in the camp. My second daughter also decided to dedicate her life to God after she came back here. She attended Soul Clinic, a Bible school in Los Angeles, and went to Beppu, Japan as a missionary and worked there. Unfortunately she died of cancer.

Q: Did you worry about your future in the camp?

A: Everybody worried, but we could not do anything about it. Fortunately I became a Christian, so I left everything to God. My oldest son and the second daughter came home first, while we stayed in the camp. The kind man who took care of the ranch vacated the house for us, so we came back.

Q: Did you come back here?

A: The house which was here before was burned down, so we pulled this house here.

Q: What year did you leave the camp?

A: I think it was in 1945.

Q: About how many months was it after your two children came back here?

A: About 3 or 4 months later when it was ready for us to come back. After we came home some Americans came and invited us to come to their church in Caruthers, so we went to church with them one sunday. In those days there was a strong anti-Japanese sentiment and everybody gave us dirty looks, but we stayed there till the end of the service and came home. The anti-Japanese people must have said that they didn't want us come to the church, because the people who invited us came and told us not to come as the atmosphere was not good. The following Sunday we went to the Methodist church. They did not welcome us but they did not reject us, so we kept on going there. Even the churches were like that in those days.

Q: What do you think they hated the most?

A: I think they hated us because we were enemies. Furthermore, after Japanese left, Mexicans and Okies had a good opportunities to get the land and houses. Then the Japanese came back so I think they resented us. Even churches were like that, much less the stores did not sell things to Japanese.

Q: Was this after you came back from the camp?

A: Yes. Some stores sold to Japanese customers, but several stores in Caruthers refused to sell to Japanese,

Q: How long did this last?

A: Not too long, about a year. In those days there were arson and shottings here and there. In the midst of this uncertain time we had our share of misfortune. One night when my second daughter was in the living-room with lights on, someone shot through the gate with a deer fifle landing 3 bullets outside and 2 inside. One bullet went in the wall, and the other one went through a table and a chair. A few moments before the bullet went through the chair, my daughter had got up from the chair. Had she been sitting on the chair she had been killed.

Q: About what time did this happen?

A: It was mid-night. About an hour before that the same man shot at a house in Selma.

Q: Was it a Japanese house in Selma?

A: Yes. It went through a crib, but baby was not in the crib.

Q: Was the criminal caught?

A: No, he wasn't. With all the arson and shooting I didn't hear of anyone getting injured or killed. We were shot at in May. I recited the 23rd Psalm over and over again in the bed trembling,

Q: I guess he knew that Japanese lived in your house, didn't he?

A: Yes, he did, but I think he did it for spite and not for revenge.

Q: Did you call anybody for help?

A: We notified the poliee immediately, but they were no help. It was a big ordeal.

Q: Did anybody from church help you?

A: No, not at that time. I think they felt sorry later. A man at a store gave me an excuse saying that he didn't want to do so but he had to because of the surrounding.

Q: Didn't you have much difficultires when you started all over again after coming back from the camp?

A: There were some kind people here. Some people did not get their property back right away, but the man who looked after our place returned it to us as soon as we came back.

Q: Did you know of any friends or acquaintances who did not have places to live?

A: No,I did not hear of any such people around here. People on the coastal areas had difficultires in finding places to live.

Q: Were thare any Japanese churches in Fresno in those days?

A: Yes, there were, but they were closed.

Q: Were any churches used as hostels?

A: Yes, some churches were opened as hostels.

Q: Was your oldest daughter most helpful to you when you came back from the camp and started all over again?

A: Yes, my oldest son and oldest daughters and others were all big, so they worked hard. I had one sickly child so I could not work, but the children all helped me.

Another happening was that our house was burned down by a fire. It was a hot day in July when the fire started from the roof of the garage, and in no time it spread to the house and burned down the house.

Q: When was this?

A: It was in 1948.

Q: What was the cause of the fire?

A: I think it was started by a short circuit or something.

Q: Was it not an arson?

A: No, it wasn't.

Q: Weren't there any more arson cases around that time?

A: No, there weren't.

Q: Was the house totaly destroyed by the fire?

A: Yes, it was burned down to the ground. Strangely enough, about 10 or 15 minutes before the fire broke out from the garage, I went shopping to Caruthers with my invalid child in the car with me. When I was coming back after shopping I saw the fire in the direction of our house, so I wondered if it was our house. As I came closer I found out that it was our house. At that time I thought it was God's will that I took the car out of the garage 15 minutes before the fire broke out and did not let my invalid child have a horrible experience.

Q: Where were you at that time?

A: I was at home. When we notice the black smoke it was too late to do anything. It was around noon and was hot, so Saburo was having a good time eating ice when the fire broke out. At that time we had one room in the garage which we used as boys' bedroom. If the fire had broken out during the night while the boys were sound asleep, I don't know what would have happened. Miraculously, the day the house was burned down we rented a big house.

Q: Was it from a friend?

A: A white neighbor told me that there is a vacant house in the neighborhood, and they wanted to rent it to a Japanese family. It was a big 3-bedroom house not like the small house that was burned down. We were led to this big house that very day. I thanked God that time.

Side 3

At that time my second son was stationed in Korea. We received a letter from him telling us that he was coming home. Then the house was burned down. As I did not know when he was coming home I prayed everyday asking God how I could tell him that the house was burned down. Finally he came back to Fresno. He was going to take a cab home, but he stopped at his cousin's jewelry store and asked his cousin to drive him home. This cousin was a quiet man and he felt sorry for my son so he did not tell him anything until they came around the corner from the house. Then he told my son that his house was burned down. My son was surprised, but we lived only about 2 miles away from thare so he came home. The family was holding a morning worship when he came home. Everyone was thankful for the blessings rather than regretting about the fire.

In Japan we say that people become richer after a fire. With such an ambition I wanted to build a hpuse. But the children said that there is an old house for sale so let's go and see it. When we went to see the house we saw an old house standing next to a beautiful new house with a tile roof. It looked like a ghost house compared to the new house standing next to it. I did't like it but the children said, "Let's be contended with it". We bought it at a bargain price and painted it. This is that house, I think my children were smarter than I was.

Q: Do you remember anything else about those days, about children, work or the church?

A: I went to Japan in 1953 for the first time since I came here.

Q: After how many years was it?

A: After 34 years. My mother was still alive and well, so she was happy to see me. My second daughter was engaged in messionwork at Beppu. She looked very healthy and was working hard, so I came home relieved. My children told me to make testimonies in Japan, so I di at several places in Japan. A year later my daughter died. She did not tell me anything, so I thought she died from accident or something, but I found out that she died of cancer. It was breast cancer, so if she had the surgery sooner she may not have died.

Q: Was Japan in 1953 a lot different from in 1919?

A: Of course it had changed a lot.

Q: Was 1953 a prosperous time in Japan?

A: Yes, it was quite prosperous. When I came here in 1919, it took a month to make a round trip between Japan and America. I stayed in Japan for about 3 months. My daughter came home from Seattle after finishing school, so I went to Japan without worries.

Q: What was changed most in Japan during 34 years of absence ?

A: The lifestyle was changed. Also my friends have all grown old, but they held alumni meetings for me, and I had a good time.

Q: As an Issei do you have any instruction or advice to Sanseis and Yonseis?

A: As I experienced a great joy in becoming a Christian and being saved, it is my wish that they have the same kind of joy. Sanseis are brought up in easy circumstances, but I don't know how long it is going to last. When they meet adverse circumstances they might have to go through ordeals, so I think they should be prepared for such time. I also would like for Niseis and Sanseis to know the culture and good points of Japan.

Q: Do you find any differences between Niseis and Sanseis in their awareness of being Japanese or interest in Japanese culture?

A: I hear that Sanseis are more interested in Japan.

Q: What do you think is the reason for that?

A: I think the reason is that Niseis remember the exclusion, so they feel a bit inferior to the white poeple's society.

Q: Then Sanseis do not have such inferiority complex, don't they?

A: No, they don't.

Q: Do you think the fact that Sanseis show interest in Japanese culture is good for them in the future?

A: I think it is necessary and important in contributing to America. Sanseis are Japanese-Americans and they cannot be completely like the white people.

K: When we go to high schools and colleges we see Japanese, Chinese, Filipinos and other Asian Americans getting together and holding all kinds of gatherings, and they are very active.

M: Yes, they are all Asians.

Q: Don't you think Niseis could'nt do such thing?

A: Niseis had to succeed Isseis so they did not have time to do such thing compared to Sanseis.

K: I think Niseis felt a bit inferior for being Japanese.

A: I think they did. Now some Niseis are active in the society, but Sanseis ~~had~~ have more freedom.

Q: What do the Sanseis in Central California consider the most important thing in life; for instance, do they think making fortune, or becoming persons of fine character the most important thing in their lives?

A: I don't know well, but it seems to me that their ambition is to get good education and get good jobs. I whish they put more emphasis on building fine characters.

K: I hear that Japanese-American children are intelligent compared to the white and the black children.

M: I don't know about colleges, but they do well in grammar schools and high schools.

Q: What do you think is the reason?

A: Maybe because the parents push them, and the children compete with other children in study. When they go to college some students don't do as well as when they were in high schools, but up to high schools Japanese children seem to be excellent students.

K: You told me in the early part of this interview that your father told you the story of Ninomiya Kinjiro. Maybe Japanese have in their minds subconsciously such teaching as to study while working.

M: Anyway, I think Japanese are diligent. Parents encourage the children and the children study hard.

Q: In the conclusion do you have any advice as a Christian?

A: I think my best bequest as an Issei is the faith. If we have faith we can overcome any kind of difficulties. Fortunately my children all have faith in God, but I hope all the Niseis and Sanseis in general have faith. I recommend this from my experience.

Q: Are ~~there~~ there any other children besides your first and second daughters and Rev. Saburo Masada who have dedicated themselves to God?

A: Others are in business, but they all belong to churches. The third daughter and her husband are members of a Holiness church in San Fernando.

Q: Why not the first or the second son but the third son become a pastor?

A: He had a strong faith, and read the Bible well. In those days young men were all going into services, but I prayed to God that he become a pastor to do God's work. When I recommended it to him he agreed, and went to Fuller Theological Seminary in Los Angeles, then he attended the theological seminary in San Anselmo. I think God showed him the way.

K: Your children are all grown up to be good Christians.

M: They are all leading Christian lives. Our weak child had been the guidance.

K: Will you please explain about it.

M: When we have a weak child normally we would wonder what kind of fate it was. As a mother I had a heavy heart, but when I read the story of Jesus healing a blind man in John 9 of the Bible, Jesus's words, "It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the work of God might be made manifest in him" struck me. I thought it was God's voice from heaven. That child was loved by God. He could not say anything but he had strong faith. When we had family prayer meeting he pointed to the person to say the prayer even though he could not talk. Through him everybody became Christians, so he is so to speak our angel. That is why I am trying to take care of him until I die.

Q: Is there anything you forgot to tell us?

A: When I was in Tokyo my father was a member of Dr. Danjo Ebina's Hongo Church. One Sunday my father took me to the church. I was a highschool girl, and I went to church to listen to the hymns not the sermon. My father was sitting in front row, and I was sitting in the back. At one time my father looked back and saw me dozing. I have never been scolded by my father before, but at that time he was very angry. He never took me to church after that. Since I came to America and had hard times I regretted that I disappointed my father. That regret stayed with me for a long time and led me to become a Christian.

Our daughter who was doing missionary work in Beppu went through hardships. When I think of her I cannot sit still, but I have an invalid child so I cannot do anything about it.

Q: When did she go to Beppu?

A: She went there in 1952 and worked for 2 years,

Q: What demomination was she in?

A: She was sent from the Soul Clinic in Los Angeles, and taught Bible and did evangelical work at a Bible School in Beppu.

Q: Is there anything you want to tell your grandchildren?

A: I want them to know that the grandmother went to heaven with faith.

Q: How many grandchildren do you have?

A: Altogether 14, 2 boys and rest of them are girls.